



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

sleep produced by it is "tranquil and refreshing, and free from dreamy sensations." Something that will soothe irritated nerves without any evil result is surely a *desideratum*.

MAWAH FLOWERS (*Bassia latifolia*) are exciting a good deal of attention just now. This plant is cultivated as cattle food, and several tons of the flowers have been received in New York from Calcutta. When packed they form a dark brown, sticky mass which is anything but attractive. The flowers are very highly prized in India, both as an article of food and for use as a source of liquors. But the remarkable part of it is the nourishing material of the flower is lodged in the corolla, which is usually only a protective or attractive organ. This corolla contains no less than 63.40 per cent. of sugar, or more than half its weight. An excellent figure and full description of this curious plant appears in the *American Agriculturist* for September.

MR. LUCIEN M. UNDERWOOD, in the last *Torrey Bulletin*, gives some artificial synopses which are of considerable interest because they attempt to simplify such perplexing groups of plants. Of course the value of such keys depends upon their usefulness, and that can be easily tested. If we can take the synopsis of the *Umbelliferae*, *Carices*, or *Salix* as given by Mr. Underwood and with reasonable ease find the specific name of any member of these groups. these pages of the *Bulletin* should be cut out and pasted in our Manuals.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND ARTS for August, contains a very curious note in the Natural History Department of "Scientific Intelligence," which is rather unusual in that eminent journal, for it devotes half a page to a note on "Mucorini as the Chief Source of Mineral Coal," which in a clause at its close it shows to be unworthy of any notice. When an investigator announces conclusions that are "wholly opposed," not only to "those of other investigators," but to "the facts," and when he has "evidently misunderstood the objects under examination" and given us "supposed facts," it is generally supposed that *Silliman's Journal* will ignore him.

"DOG-FENNEL" seems to change its name with its place. In glancing over an agricultural paper we see notices of "dog fennel," and the eastern editor says it is *Eupatorium feniculaceum*. This may be so where this *Eupatorium* grows, but to every man, woman and child in the west, "dog-fennel" means *Maruta Cotula*, or the eastern "May-weed."

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY, Part I, 1880, is just at hand, and we note the report of the committee on plants introduced by means of the International Exhibition. The report can be condensed into the simple word "nothing," for although 13 plants were found that were "strangers," not a single one of them showed any tendency to set seed or spread. Some of the 13 are our own western plants, others are from Europe, and a few from Japan.

NOTULÆ EXIGUÆ.—In the May number of the GAZETTE the undersigned asked for fresh seeds of *Ipomœa pandurata*. A few were kindly supplied by an obliging correspondent (whose letter and name have

been lost), and one has germinated. It behaves in the manner anticipated. In view of the curious behavior in germination of *Megarrhiza* and of *Ipomœa leptophylla*, which both agree in lengthening greatly the petioles of the cotyledons, and both have a huge root, it was thought likely that *I. pandurata*, which is also huge rooted, would also keep its caulicle short and elevate its cotyledons on long petioles. And we find that it does so. The germination of the tuberous-rooted species of New Mexico and Arizona, also of the Carolin an *I. Jalappa*, should now be observed. Mr. Darwin, always sagacious, has suggested that the object of this peculiarity is to leave the primary bud upon the apex of the huge root well underground, for its greater safety, whether against severe cold or drought. It will be interesting to know whether all the great-rooted *Convolvulaceæ* have this peculiarity. Seedlings of *Ipomœa Jalappa*, sent by Dr. Mellichamp from South Carolina, appear to present an intermediate condition.

A good illustration of the truth of the doctrine "ne nimum crede colori" is supplied by Dr. Charles W. Swan, of Lowell, Mass., who sends us white flowered individuals of *Gratiola aurea*, growing in the midst of bright yellow ones; also after a little search, some in intermediate ones with pale yellow corolla.

In my First Lessons, in Structural Botany, etc., I have taken the embryo of Maples, without discrimination, as a pattern of embryo without a plumule ready-formed. I ought to have known the soft White-Maple (*Acer dasycarpum*), having thick cotyledons, well stored with nourishment, ought to have a ready-formed plumule. If I had thought of it and examined, I should have found it so, and should have used this species as an illustration. Mr. C. S. Deane, of Grundy, Iowa, has supplied my omission and called my attention to the fact. There is a good plumule in the seed, like that of the bean. In the books referred to, where Maples in general are mentioned, Sugar Maple and Red Maple are to be understood.

Polygonum cilinode roots at the tip of slender axillary branches, and so propagates freely. This is noted by E. L. Hankenson, of Newark, New York.

Cleistogamous species of Helianthemum were supposed to exist only in America. Dr. Ascherson calls attention to one in Spain and another in Egypt which were essentially indicated by Linnaeus and by Delile. He particularly confirms the fact, and speaks of a number of other plants which become cleistogamous in the African desert, where insects are scarce.

It was Prof. Decaisne, we believe, who long ago explained that the uncultivability of Rhinanthideous plants (such as *Pedicularis*, *Gerardia*, etc.) was owing to their parasitism in early life. He has, of late, succeeded in raising them well by sowing the freshly ripened seeds on turf, containing grasses and Leguminous plants. It should be tried with our *Gerardias* and the pretty *Orthocarpi* of California.—A. GRAY.

MESEMBRIANTHEMUM, not *Mesembryanthemum*.—So it is properly written by Jacob Breynne, who made the name, and by Dillenius